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WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Doris Matsui (CA-5) joined the Corporation for National and Community Service in announcing a \$250,000 grant to the Sacramento City Unified School District today. The funds were awarded by the agency as part of its Learn and Serve America 2010 Summer of Service program that engages low-income students in grades 6 through 9 in innovative summer service projects that address local environmental issues.

“This large federal grant could not come at a better time for our community,” said Rep. Matsui. “An infusion of \$250,000 into Sacramento City Unified — the second largest award of its kind in the country — will enable the District to provide new opportunities for 500 students, and engage them in community service projects in our community. Not only will this make a world of difference in the individual lives of these students, it will make a world of difference for our community.”

The Sacramento City Unified School District’s six-week Summer of Service program will give 500 at-risk 9th grade students the opportunity to participate in several innovative service-learning activities that address environmental issues in their community. Students will build community gardens, measure and monitor pollution in a local creek and participate in projects that enable them to learn about environmental health and the negative impact of water pollution on the local area.

“These grants will put tomorrow’s leaders to work solving America’s most pressing problems today,” said Patrick Corvington, the Corporation’s CEO. “Thousands of young people will spend their summer making real and lasting impact in their communities, while starting on a lifelong path of service.”

The Summer of Service program is a new initiative that was established under the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in April 2009. The Corporation awarded grants totaling \$2 million to 17 nonprofit organizations, universities and schools that oversee summer service-learning programs that focus on environmental or disaster preparedness issues. Students across the country will participate in a myriad of activities including assessing local environmental issues, planting gardens, “greening” homes, preparing and distributing disaster preparedness kits, and undertaking service projects in local and national parks. In addition to the grant funding, participants in the Summer of Service program who complete at least 100 hours of service will be eligible to receive a \$500 education award that can be used to pay for post-secondary education expenses.

Learn and Serve America, which administers the Summer of Service initiative, provides funding support to organizations that involve over one million young people in service-learning projects that simultaneously support student development and meet community needs. Service-learning is a method of teaching and learning that connects specific learning objectives with meaningful service to the community. Students build civic and leadership skills while strengthening communities through service.

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Congresswoman Doris Matsui serves as the Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus in Congress, which provides funding and support for America's national and community service projects. A life-long supporter of service and volunteerism, Matsui was an original co-sponsor of the Serve America Act and serves as the Honorary Chair of Volunteer Sacramento.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.